

my office—be granted floor privileges until May 4, 2023.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MAY 4, 2023

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m., Thursday, May 4; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that following the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Hunt nomination postcloture and that all time be considered expired at 11:30 a.m.; further, that following the cloture vote on the Shogan nomination, notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate resume consideration of the Gupta nomination, with the time until 1:45 p.m. equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, and at 1:45 p.m. the Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination; further, that if any nominations are confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. For the information of the Senate, there will be two rollcall votes at 11:30 a.m. and one at 1:45 p.m.

#### ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the very, very learned remarks of Senator SULLIVAN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I thank the majority leader for his fine compliment to me on the Senate floor about learned remarks. I appreciate that.

Mr. SCHUMER. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. SULLIVAN. I appreciate that very much.

Not if you are going to take away your compliment—if you are going to keep it, I will yield.

Mr. SCHUMER. I just want to reserve the right to read the remarks before closing debate.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Actually, I think you will appreciate these remarks.

Mr. SCHUMER. I thank the Senator. I yield the floor and am looking forward to the Senator's remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

#### U.S. NAVY

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, recently, there have been numerous articles in the media about the U.S. Navy's lack of amphibious ships—one that I would like to submit for the RECORD, headlined "Grounding of U.S. Marine Unit Spotlights Lack of Ships in Asia-Pacific," can be found online at <https://www.wsj.com/articles/grounding-of-u-s-marine-unit-spotlights-lack-of-ships-in-asia-pacific-757315b4>.

(Mr. WHITEHOUSE assumed the Chair.)

In this piece, the writer leads with how the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, a rapid response force of the Marine Corps designed for quick deployment on three Navy ships—what we call an "amphibious ready group"—how they were forced to abandon a training exercise because the amphibious warships that they are supposed to train on were not available due to maintenance problems.

Here is what the article said in part:

The Marine unit's grounded status illustrates the larger obstacles the United States is facing as it tries to pivot its military to handle the challenges from China. Overall, defense officials said the Navy doesn't have enough amphibious ships to transport marines, and a central part of the Marine Corps's mission is to hop from island to island in the Asia-Pacific and harry Chinese forces in the event of a conflict.

By the way, Mr. President, the Marines are really good at this. They have been doing it for decades. But they need ships.

Another article from Defense News is also a recent one about the lack of amphibious ships and the problem that poses. This one is from another part of the world but very recent. The article starts with how hundreds of American citizens were stranded in war-torn Sudan.

It says:

Hundreds of Americans in war-torn Sudan last month needed a way out of the country, but the U.S. Marine Corps, the go-to service for such rescues [of American citizens] couldn't help.

The article continued:

Typically, this kind of mission would be standard for the Navy and Marine Corps' amphibious ready group—

A Marine expeditionary unit, or what we call in the Marine Corps a MEU, a MEU-R, a Marine expeditionary unit, an amphibious ready group—three ships, super well trained, special operations capable, can go anywhere in the world, kick the door in, save American citizens.

The article continues:

For the Americans who fled to the coast [in Sudan] the Pentagon sent an auxiliary transport ship—

that they contracted out, I believe, from another country—to shuttle them safely to . . . Saudi Arabia.

It was, in essence, a self-evacuation of U.S. citizens.

Mr. President, NPR reported that the buses actually took hundreds of Americans to the Port of Sudan. Imagine—imagine—my colleagues, what would have happened had those Americans, traveling in contract buses in the middle of a civil war, got caught in the crossfire.

The article that I just quoted was entitled "Marines want 31 amphibious ships. The Pentagon disagrees. Now what?" I ask unanimous consent to have that article printed in the RECORD at the end of my remarks.

Finally, Mr. President, there was another recent article from Defense One. Its title was "Navy On Path To Violate 31-Amphibious-Ship Requirement in 2024."

Now, Mr. President, this is what I wanted to get to. Last year, in the Armed Services Committee, we held a number of hearings with the Navy and the Marine Corps saying: What is the minimum number of amphibious ships that would enable the Marine Corps to do its global force response mission—the minimum number? After many hearings, after much discussion with the Marines and Navy, we came up, in a bill of mine, with a minimum of 31 ships.

This bill in the Armed Services Committee last year passed unanimously. Every Democrat and every Republican voted for it.

The law now reads as follows. I know this is a little small, but here is the new U.S. Code that has the new language. It says:

The naval combat forces of the Navy shall include not less than 11 operational aircraft carriers and not less than 31 operational amphibious warfare ships, of which not less than 10 shall be amphibious assault ships—

What we call in the Marine Corps "big-deck assault ships" that can carry helicopters and Ospreys and Harriers and now F-35 Bravos. That was the law. That passed. The President signed it.

Here is the problem. The U.S. Navy is violating the law. The U.S. Navy is treating that law—31 amphibs, a minimum—as a suggestion from the Congress, as an option from the Congress.

How do I know? Because we had a hearing 2 weeks ago on the Armed Services Committee, and the Secretary of the Navy essentially said: We are looking at different options for the President's budget on how many amphibs that the Navy is going to have.

And, currently, the Navy presented a budget that doesn't have 31 amphibs.

I had some cross words with the Secretary of the Navy, the CNO of the Navy, because they are violating the law. And I will tell you, my Democratic and Republican colleagues on the Armed Services Committee were supportive of what I was saying. We had a hearing on the Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee yesterday. The Vice Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Franchetti, said that the Navy was "studying the issue."

The Navy can't study the issue anymore. The Navy needs to follow the